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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ROME 000194

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DEPARTMENT FOR PM/WRA KATHERINE BAKER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/29/2017
TAGS: [MOPS](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [NATO](#) [IT](#)
SUBJECT: ITALY TO PUSH FOR CCW AGREEMENT ON CLUSTER
MUNITIONS; WILL ATTEND OSLO CONFERENCE

REF: SECSTATE 06667

Classified By: Political-Military Counselor Jonathan Cohen for reasons
1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: The GOI generally supports finding ways to limit the use of cluster munitions but does not believe the Oslo Conference is the appropriate venue for the discussion. Italy's center-left coalition government is sympathetic to multilateral efforts that appear to defend humanitarian principles, but the GOI will attend Oslo in the hopes that it can steer the debate toward the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) auspices. The GOI is open to engaging in military to military discussion on cluster munitions (CMs), but believes this can be accomplished on the margins of CCW meetings or within NATO to include Norway. End Summary.

¶2. (C) Poloff delivered Ref demarche to Emanuele Farruggia from the Non-proliferation office at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Farruggia underscored that the GOI's policy on cluster munitions (CMs) is generally in synch with the USG's, but that the center-left government is under pressure from parliament, public opinion, and NGOs to restrict the use of CMs. Moreover, the GOI is loathe to turn away from a multilateral effort that tries to achieve a perceived humanitarian goal. However, the Italian military resists a total ban on CMs, citing the potential impact on military capability and rules of engagement when participating in a coalition mission.

(SBU) Going to Oslo, But Emphasis On CCW

¶3. (C) Italy has not received a formal invitation to attend the Oslo conference but will attend anyway based on the GON's informal soundings. Farruggia noted that EU members recently discussed the Oslo conference and shared their confusion over the goal of the meeting and the GON's methodology in extending invitations. The GON also has not raised the issue in NATO, which would have been an appropriate venue. If the point was to invite only potentially like-minded countries, Farruggia added, the GON is being shortsighted. A discussion on CMs must be genuinely multilateral and comprehensive.

¶4. (C) The Italian delegation to Oslo is not yet finalized, but it may be led by Italy's Perm Rep in Geneva and some representatives from Italy's General Staff. The GOI will go

to Oslo mainly in listening mode but will try to engage in some "damage control," said Farruggia. The GOI believes a process outside the CCW that could fuel demagoguery serves no useful purpose. Therefore, the GOI will do what it can to steer the discussion on CMs back into the CCW. Farruggia advised that the USG should go to Oslo if invited to demonstrate extraordinary flexibility and be in a better position to influence the discussion.

(SBU) Pushing "Protocol VI" for CCW

15. (C) Italian officials, in coordination with the Italian military, hope to revive the idea of establishing a "Protocol VI" to the CCW but will not explicitly raise this issue in Oslo. Farruggia noted, however, that the GOI may champion the issue at the June experts meeting of the CCW. The idea would be to discuss ways to govern the use of CMs multilaterally, and the GOI is open to broaching the humanitarian legal aspects of such potential restrictions on the margins of the meeting at Montreaux in April. Farruggia said that the GOI can envision limiting the use of CMs to within Italy's national territory (for self defense) or using them only if taking part in a coalition mission such as NATO.

(SBU) Engaging the Military

16. (C) Farruggia did not dismiss military to military discussions on CMs, but believed this was already happening at some level. Rather than spark multiple levels of discussions on CMs, mil to mil talks could take place informally on the margins of CCW meetings, given that most of

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the experts are in attendance. He suggested that the upcoming meeting in Montreaux might offer such an opportunity. At the same time, Farruggia noted that NATO could be another appropriate venue for mil to mil discussions, particularly since Norway is a member of the Alliance.
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